



## Special points of interest:

- Remarks from Chairman Maureen Walsh
- Ex-offender turns life around working at local career center
- Parole Board to co-sponsor Job Fair for hard-to-employ workers

## Majority in Parole's Housing Program have history of Substance Abuse

The average person admitted to the Massachusetts Parole Board's pilot housing program for ex-offenders is a single, 34-year-old male parolee with a history of substance abuse.

More than 200 parolees and ex-offenders have obtained up to four months of housing and case management through a Department of Justice grant managed by parole, known as the Violent Incarceration and Truth in Sentencing [VOI/TIS] grant.

Housing is provided under contract by seven drug rehabilitation and social service agencies which offer "wraparound" services: job skills training,

mental health and substance abuse treatment, anger management, and other life skills counseling. Participants are provided housing at nine facilities throughout the state.

Ninety-two percent of those admitted to the program report a substance abuse problem, most commonly cocaine, followed by alcohol, then heroin. Participants frequently report problems with more than one substance.

Depression is the most widespread mental health problem reported by the 33 percent of participants who admit to experiencing mental health problems.

Nineteen percent of participants were employed at the time of intake, and

roughly half have a GED or high school diploma. Only one percent of those admitted to the program have a college diploma.

Close to half—43 percent—of admitted participants have one child, and 38 percent have three or more children, although 77 percent report being single.

Roughly half of VOI/TIS participants have a valid form of identification, such as a driver's license, birth certificate, or social security card.\*

\*Report reflects statistics collected by Program Coordinator Stephanie Coughlin February 1, 2006.

## Parole's Housing Program Yields 44 Percent Reemployment Rate

Forty-four percent of the 195 ex-offenders discharged from Massachusetts Parole Board-sponsored housing since July found jobs, according to parole board statistics.

Under a grant from the Department of Justice, parole has provided up to four months of housing and case management to selected parolees and ex-offenders at contracted sober houses and long-term residential treat-

ment programs throughout the state.

The statistics show that graduating residents of long-term residential treatment programs are less likely to be employed than those graduating sober houses. Twenty-five percent of long-term program residents graduated with jobs, in comparison to 52 percent of residents leaving sober houses. Sober houses often require

residents to work and pay program fees, while the emphasis in long-term residential treatment programs is on substance abuse recovery, meetings, and classes. Residents must attend at least 40 hours of substance abuse and mental health programming a week. The theory behind this approach is that if residents focus on recovering from addictions and mental health problems (*continued on pg. 6*)

## Chairman's Column

*By Parole Board Chairman Maureen Walsh*

On the eve of the move from Medfield, I thought it might be important to reflect for a moment on our past and look to our future at the Massachusetts Parole Board.

Just three short years ago, almost exactly to the date, the news was not very positive for the agency. Budget cuts hit every agency hard, and the Massachusetts Parole Board was not in any condition to absorb more loss. Lay-offs of long time employees, consolidation of services, and a move from Boston to Medfield are just a few of the "highlights" that plagued us during the early years.

Luckily for the agency, our former Chairman Michael Pomarole paved the way for better relations with many of our partners – the Massachusetts Sheriffs Association and the Legislature, to name two. Working on this success, many if not all from parole worked toward improving the position of the agency. These ingredients certainly played a major role in why we are in a better position today.

With the support of the Romney/Healey administration, as well as former Secretary of Public Safety, Edward Flynn, and Undersecretary of Public Safety Patrick Bradley, the agency started to make inroads in its efforts toward reentry and building the infrastructure in order to reduce the crime committed by ex-offenders. The Executive Office of Public Safety has consistently been supportive of the parole mission and the importance of reentry in the public safety arena. Many others, including the Governor's Council members, have also supported our agency, especially in more difficult times.

Now, with the support of the Legislature, we are happy to report that we are making great strides in our performance and are obtaining the necessary tools to do the job. We all recognize that the job of parole staff is difficult enough. Without the proper resources, it is next to impossible. Next year, I am pleased to report that we will be moving forward in a positive manner to bring in the tools and resources necessary to better our agency. Training and professional development are two areas of interest that I hope we will see significant improvement in.

With that said, given the nature of our business and the inherent risk of supervising offenders in the community, I also realize that we will not always have good news to report. Certainly, there will be news articles or other occurrences that attempt to portray the work of the agency in a negative way. We recognize this, and also know that progress sometimes happens "two steps forward and one step back." All in all, I am very proud of the daily work of our agency and I hope that you are too!

So, in closing, we are grateful to have had Medfield as a "soft landing" place, and are looking forward to continued success in our new home in Natick.

"Next year, I am pleased to report that we will be moving forward in a positive manner to bring in the tools and resources necessary to better our agency."

-Parole Board  
Chairman Maureen  
Walsh

## ***Ex-offenders in Springfield Region Reemployed, Paying Back in the System***

The Springfield [Region 5] Regional Reentry Center [RRC] assisted a total of 140 ex-offenders in securing jobs between January, 2004 and December, 2005, according to a Parole Board analysis.

Earning a total of \$2,043,578.49 in wages, ex-offenders paid approximately \$108,309.66 back into the system in taxes. The average wage earned was \$14,596.99 in this period.

The wage analysis was conducted by running ex-offender's social security numbers at the state Division of Unemployment Assistance. Staff assessed income tax data to calculate the number of ex-offenders employed and their earnings. The study did not include ex-offenders who worked in other states, nor did it include ex-offenders who are self-employed.

While ex-offenders found employment in a range of fields, the top three were waste management and remediation services, accommodation and food services, and wholesale trade. Forty-four percent found work in waste management industries; twenty-four percent in food services; and ten percent in wholesale trade. Construction followed close behind, employing 8.5 percent of ex-offenders.

Springfield Reentry Supervisor Brad Burnett said that the effort to get ex-offenders employed has been collabora-

tive at the RRC. The task, while challenging, has been made easier with the addition of Pam Moore, the region's substance abuse coordinator, who started working at the RRC in April. Contracted by parole, Ms. Moore works for the Spectra Center, part of the Springfield-based behavioral health services center Clinical and Support Options, Inc. More than 70 percent of parolees and ex-

offenders sent to job interviews arranged by the Spectra Center have been hired, according to Mr. Burnett.

Parolees and ex-offenders in the Springfield region were given a further boost to their job search in March by a career fair sponsored by the Hampden County Sheriff's Department and the local career centers Career Point and Future Works.

### **Parole Board to host Job Fair in Brockton**

**The Parole Board will co-sponsor a job fair for ex-offenders on June 15 from 10 AM to 12 PM at the Mount Moriah Baptist Church on 24 Pleasant Street in Brockton. The event is an opportunity for employers to find workers who are looking to prove themselves.**

**The job fair will include information sessions for employers about the federal bonding program and tax credits.**

**Eligible workers will have the opportunity to attend a resume workshop and network with potential employers.**

**Employers who would like to register for the job fair may contact Ray Yancey or Rose O'Brien at 508-588-0833 or email [rosio@comcast.net](mailto:rosio@comcast.net).**

**The registration deadline is June 6.**

**The job fair is being co-sponsored by the U.S. Probation Office, Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, the Massachusetts Division of Career Services and Division of Apprentice Training, and the Brockton Career Center.**

## Ex-offender gives his life a Makeover as Image Consultant

Steve Gilboard has always taken pride in his appearance. Even after spending time in federal prison, he dresses sharp and helps others in his situation look their best too. "I get paid to do what I love," said Mr. Gilboard, who helps women ex-offenders find flattering and professional clothing, hairstyles, and cosmetics for the post-incarceration job hunt.

A steady job is essential to an ex-offender's successful reentry, and crucial to finding that job is a polished look. This is where Mr. Gilboard comes in. Mr. Gilboard is a "personal needs specialist" in a special pilot program for female offenders called the Women Offender Reentry Collaborative [WORC]. WORC is run by the Work Place on Winter Street, a career center that provides job skills training, resume building, and other job readiness services to Massachusetts residents. WORC is funded by a three-year grant earmarked to assist women ex-offenders find long-term employment and housing through individual case management.

Living in transitional housing at the St. Francis House homeless shelter on Boylston Street, Mr. Gilboard dresses in Prada and Hermes suits. He hunts down samples and freebies from top-of-the-line clothing and cosmetic stores on Newbury Street, hoping to show his clientele the little luxuries they can attain through hard work.

No stranger to the finer things in life, his ardent desire to sample and acquire got Mr. Gilboard into serious trouble. He grew up observing his uncle's pharmacy practice, hoping someday to become a pharmacist himself. By age 17, he was intercepting the drug samples his uncle received in the mail and trying



Steve Gilboard models a carefully selected outfit in his room at St. Francis House, a homeless shelter on Boylston Street.

them all. He graduated with honors from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacology and Health Sciences, impressing his professors with detailed knowledge about the drugs he studied. One day, a professor pulled him aside and asked how he was able to remember so much detailed information about every type of drug. "I try them all," Mr. Gilboard told the professor. Not knowing what to make of the remark, the professor told Mr. Gilboard that, if he was telling the truth, he was headed for serious trouble.

After college, Mr. Gilboard opened up a successful pharmaceutical practice and started raising a family. His drug use continued, and soon he was selling thousands of pills without prescription to customers outside his practice. He believed he had it all: money, material possessions, and an unlimited stream of wealthy and prominent clients. But his addiction escalated,

and his life became increasingly out of control.

Mr. Gilboard was arrested in 2002 and sentenced to three years in prison after police raided his home and found thousands of pills. Mr. Gilboard confessed that he accrued the pills in a variety of ways, such as obtaining unfilled prescriptions from dead or dying hospice patients, or filling outdated prescriptions. He pled guilty in federal court to three counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

Mr. Gilboard was sentenced to FMC-Devons, where he entered the federal drug program, an intensive counseling program of classes five days a week and six hours a day. By successfully completing the program, Mr. Gilboard was released from prison 18 months early—on August 6, 2005—and admitted to a halfway house.

Mr. Gilboard soon learned about the Moving Ahead Program [MAP] at St. Francis House, and was admitted as a student. He says that MAP was a major turning point in his life. The 14-week program serves men and women who have experienced substance abuse, homelessness, and unemployment. The program combines job skills and life readiness training, and ends with an internship and graduation ceremony. As a MAP student, Mr. Gilboard's eye for fashion was inspired by Studio Shine, a program that helps MAP students find a personal style for their chosen line of work. Through donations from the retail clothing industry, cosmetic companies, and individuals, Studio Shine provides students with five days worth of clothing after a consultation.

*(continued on pg. 5)*

**"Recovery is not an event, but a process."**

**-Steve Gilboard, addict and former offender**



## Skills, Education Broaden Employment Opportunities for Parolees

Of the two ex-offenders discharged this month from the Boston-area sober house Brooke House, one was employed and one was not. Their status reflects a trend in offenders discharging from a Massachusetts Parole Board-funded housing program that began July 15, 2006. Nearly half—44 percent—of the parolees and ex-offenders in the program have been employed at discharge.

Since July, the parole board has funded 70 beds throughout the state where selected ex-offenders and parolees can stay for up to four months at a time. Brooke House is one of nine facilities the parole board has contracted with to provide the housing and services. Of the fifty beds at Brooke House, ten are paid for by parole and reserved for parolees or ex-offenders processed at one of parole's Regional Reentry Centers [RRC's]. The Parole Board secured funding for the program through a Department of Justice grant called the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth in Sentencing [VOI/TIS] grant.

So far, 38 parolees have discharged from Brooke House, although not all of them completed the full four months of the program. Residents in parole-funded beds stay on one floor, sharing rooms with up to three other people. They receive case management, and are provided with information about Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and other meetings and counseling, as well as job skills training. Residents in parole-funded beds are required to work and save 70 percent of their gross pay in a savings account. The money is later applied toward transitional housing.

Brooke House resident Rafael, 28, is lucky enough to have a job lined up when he leaves the program this month. A college graduate and now a student at the Wentworth Institute of Technology, Mr. Estrada has experience in web design and was able to find work through Monster.com as a system administrator for a local company. It seems that one of the biggest stresses

among his fellow residents at Brooke House has been finding a job, he said.

Alhuda, 34, is also being discharged from Brooke House this month.

As of mid-May, he had not been able to find a steady job. Mr. Jones has a high school diploma, but not a college degree. At the beginning of his four months at Brooke House, he had two jobs—one at the shipping and delivery company DHL, the other at Boston Market. Neither job worked out—one was temporary, while the other required him to work too many hours. As a result, Mr. Jones has been unemployed for two months. While he has housing lined up for his release from Brooke House, he has a 7-year-old child and bills to pay. His days are filled with interviews and appointments, and he is on the waitlist to attend tractor-trailer school. During job interviews, he tells potential employers about his history right up front. "I tell people, this is what I did, and this is how much time I spent."

**Nearly half —44 percent—of parolees and former offenders who have participated in a parole board housing program were employed upon completion of the program.**

### Ex-offender starts new life as image consultant (continued from pg. 4)

...While Mr. Gilboard's family is back in his life now, they were hurt, humiliated, and angry for a long time. Mr. Gilboard experienced the most painful wakeup call of his life when he read a hurt, angry letter from his daughter while at the federal drug program. She had been asked by a doctor in the program to describe the impact of

her father's criminal involvement and drug use. Thinking of the letter and the pain he caused his family frequently makes Mr. Gilboard cry. "I didn't serve time in jail. Jail served me. I got a master's degree in self," he said.

Mr. Gilboard is entering his fifth year of sobriety, a marked achievement for someone who

was, in his words, "never *not* under the influence of a controlled substance" between the ages of 17 and 56. "For forty straight years, I took a controlled substance every day," he said. One thing that keeps him from taking drugs is that he can never know exactly what the consequences will be. He is vigilant about his recovery.

### **New Address!**

## **Massachusetts Parole Board**

**12 Mercer Road**

**Natick, MA. 01760**

**Phone: 508-650-4500**

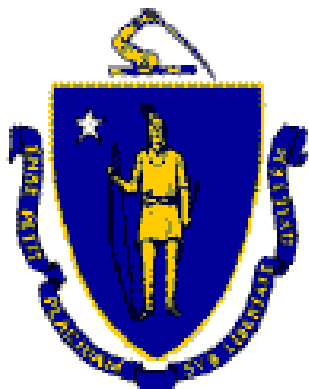
**Email: [anna.kivlan@state.ma.us](mailto:anna.kivlan@state.ma.us)**



*The Massachusetts Parole Board* is an agency within the Executive Office of Public Safety responsible for identifying parole eligible offenders and conducting release decisions to determine if an offender is an appropriate candidate for parole supervision. Such offenders are allowed to serve the remainder of their sentence in the community under a strict set of conditions and supervision by a parole officer. Because the agency's vision must include long-range community safety, paroled offenders must adhere to a tailored intervention program addressing their needs for substance abuse recovery, education, and employment.

### **The Massachusetts Parole Board Central Administrative Office is Moving!**

In early June, the Parole Board will move its central administrative offices from 45 Hospital Road in Medfield to 12 Mercer Road in Natick. The Reentry Unit, now located at the transportation building in Boston, will join central office staff at the new site.



### **Parole Board Housing Program Employment Rates (continued from pg. 1)**

...in a safe, controlled environment, they will be less likely to relapse and re-offend upon entering society and the workforce.

Of the eight contracted facilities, the Brooke House in Boston, the Foundation House in Springfield, the WRAP House in New Bedford, and three South Middlesex Opportunity Council [SMOC] facilities in Worcester, Lawrence, and Framingham, are considered sober houses. The North Cottage Program in Norton,

St. Francis House in Boston, and the Harmony House in New Bedford are all considered long-term residential treatment programs.

As of May 15, residents in parole-funded beds at sober houses and long-term residential treatment programs had spent a total of 4,680 hours in job training and placement counseling. Pa-



role's housing program began July 15, 2006.